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Determinants of Households' Income Poverty in the South-South Geopolitical Zone of Nigeria

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Abstract. This paper analyzed income poverty in the south-south geopolitical zone of Nigeria using the FGT model and a logit regression on the 2009-10 National Living Standard Survey data. Zonal level results showed 0.4924, 0.203 and 0.113 poverty incidence, gap and severity respectively. Poverty incidence in Delta and Edo States were fairly higher than the zonal average while those of the other states were marginally less than the zonal average. While rural share of poverty was 82%, urban share was a meager 18%. Contrary to a widely held view this study showed that male contributed more (91.56%) to poverty than female (8.44%) in the zone. The agricultural sector had a share of 74.75%. This study recommended that poverty reduction efforts should aim at providing rural households equal opportunity to achieve their potentials not minding the state of residence.

Keywords: Gap, Households, Incidence, Income, Nigeria, Poverty, Severity, South – South
JEL: C13, C21, I32

1. INTRODUCTION

The rising profile of poverty in Nigeria is assuming a worrisome dimension every passing day. Nigeria has at least half of its population living in abject poverty (Ojo, 2008). The National Bureau of Statistics (1996) reported that poverty has been massive, pervasive, and engulfs a large proportion of the Nigerian society. According to Abiola and Olaopa (2008), the scourge of poverty in Nigeria is an incontrovertible fact, which results in hunger, ignorance, malnutrition, disease, unemployment, poor access to credit facilities, and low life expectancy as well as a general level of human hopelessness. The Nigerian story is truly a paradox. The country is rich, but the people are poor. Omotola (2008), noted that Nigeria is richly endowed, the country's wealth potentials manifest in the forms of natural, geographical, and socioeconomic factors. With this condition, Nigeria should rank among the richest countries of the world that should have no business with extreme poverty. However, Okpe and Abu (2009) remarked that Nigeria has witnessed a monumental increase in the level of poverty, every measure of poverty ranks Nigeria at the bottom list of nations. The Human Development Index (HDI) of 0.423 ranks the country 142 out of 169 countries in 2010 with estimated GNI per capita of $2156, life expectancy at birth of 48.4 years, Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) of 0.368 (UNDP, 2010).

Apart from the overwhelming evidence, which suggests that, the country belongs to the group of the lower-income countries (GNP per capita of $US269 at PPP in 2000), the incidence of poverty has continued to rise with each passing day. Thus, poverty incidence that was just 15 percent of the population in 1960 rose to 28.1% in 1980 and further to 43.6% in 1985. The incidence of poverty dropped marginally to 42% in 1992 only to rise to 67% in 1996, 74.2 in 2000 and 92.5% in 2010 (Garba, 2006; Okpe and Abu, 2009; Alayande and Alayande, 2004; NBS, 2010). The UN Human Poverty Index, in 1999, placed Nigeria among the 25 poorest nations in the world. According to UNDP (2010) report, the population in poverty was 68.7 million, as of 2004. This is a very tragic situation when one considers the fact that Nigeria has

had over $300 billion in oil and gas revenues since independence but it is sad to know that up to 95 percent of this great wealth is controlled by about .01 percent of the population (Awa, 1983).

Poverty in Nigeria is said to be mainly a rural phenomenon with agriculture accounting for the highest incidence over the years. This study focused the South-South Geopolitical Zone. The situation in this zone is not quite different being the hub of the Nigerian monotonic economy. Oil and gas exploration and exploitation activities have rendered the ecosystem less habitable for aquatic and terrestrial lives, and less useful for agricultural activities. In spite of this there is lack of well documented facts on the incidence of poverty in the zone over the years which, perhaps explains the dearth of empirical works on poverty with specific reference to the zone.

Edoumiekumo et al (2013a), noted that for any poverty alleviation program to thrive, the questions to be answered are: (i) what proportion of the people are poor? (ii) How far are the poor from the poverty line? (iii) what is the gap between the average poor and the core poor and (iv) what are the determinants of poverty in the given society? Once these questions are answered correctly then one will be able to know who the poor are, where they live, and why they are poor. By examining the incidence, depth, severity, and correlates of poverty in the South-South geopolitical Zone of Nigeria, this paper will provide answers to the above questions, contribute to the existing body of knowledge and by implication fill a gap in the literature. This paper would also serve as a platform for people oriented policy towards poverty alleviation in the zone.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The issue of poverty is a serious one which has triggered renewed efforts by researchers in recent years to investigate into its causes. Akerele and Adewuyi(2011) were concerned with the incidence, depth and severity of poverty in Ekiti state of Nigeria, Onu and Abayomi (2009) concentrated on poverty among households living in Yola metropolis of Adamawa state of Nigeria, Obayelu and Awoyemi (2010)

focused on poverty profile across geopolitical zones in rural Nigeria. Ogwumike and Akinnibosun (2013) were concerned with the determinants of poverty among farming households in Nigeria. Adeyonu et al (2012) studied poverty level among farmers in rural areas of Oyo State of Nigeria. Onyemauwa et al (2013) were concerned with the effect of household poverty level on child labour participation among households in Isoko North Local Government Area of Delta State of Nigeria. The study of Fabiyi et al (2008) focused on the incidence and severity of poverty among small-scale farmers in five local government areas of Ogbomoso ADP Zone, Oyo State of Nigeria. Aigbokhan (2000) concentrated on the inequality and poverty profile in Nigeria during the period 1985-1997, Babatunde et al (2008) looked at the determinants of farm household poverty in south-western Nigeria. Olawuyi and Adetunji (2013) focused on the incidence, severity and the determinants of household poverty in Ogbomoso Agricultural Zone of Oyo State, Nigeria. The various findings were quite revealing. For instance Akerele and Adewuyi (2011) using a multistage sampling approach and a total of 80 selected households showed that 38.30 percent of the households studied in Ekiti state of Nigeria were poor and would have to mobilize financial resources up to 41.80% of 1 US Dollar (N130) per day (for each household member) to be able to escape poverty. Further results showed that Female headed households in the study area were more vulnerable to income poverty with poverty incidence, depth and severity of 0.221and 0.239, 0.402 and 0.191, respectively. Highest levels of poverty were found among household with 7-9 dependants with values 1.00, 0.715 and 0.511 for the incidence, depth and severity of poverty respectively. Educational levels of household head and spouse, gender of household head and dependency ratio are factors that exact significant influence on household welfare. Edoumiekumo et al (2013a) were concerned with household poverty and vulnerability to poverty in Bayelsa state of Nigeria. They used the National Bureau of Statistic 2009-10 NLSS data and showed a poverty line of N22393.62. They also showed poverty incidence, gap and severity of 25, 14.26 and 8.6 percents respectively. Out of the total population 59.73% were vulnerable. Whereas 34.35% constituted transient poverty, chronic poverty constituted 25.38%.

The key determinants of poverty in Bayelsa state were showed to be household size, per capita expenditure on education, per capita expenditure on health and per capita expenditure on food.

From the literature reviewed it is obvious that an ample of studies have been carried out in Nigeria on income poverty but with no specific reference to the south-south geopolitical zone. This paper will therefore contribute to the debate of the determinants (correlates) of poverty and fill an existing gap in the literature by analyzing the incidence, gap and severity of poverty, and its correlates in the south-south geopolitical zone of Nigeria.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Area of Study and Data

The South-South geopolitical zone of Nigeria located at latitude 4^0N longitude 6^0E is made up of Akwa-Ibom, Bayelsa, Cross-river, Delta, Edo and Rivers states. It covers an area of 84,587km^2 and has a coastline spread over 540km. The area is bordered to the South by the Atlantic Ocean and to the East by Cameroun. The area is inhabited by the Izons, Urhobo, Isoko, Ikwere, Ika, Ukwuani, Abua, Itsekiri, Ogoni, Efik, Ibibio, and Bini (Ibaba, 2005; Etekpe, 2007). Until the environmental degradation and disturbance of the ecosystem through oil exploration and exploitation activities, fishing has been a major economic activity in the area. People in the zone predominantly engage in Agriculture. Yams, cassava, plantains, oil palms and bananas are the main crops grown. The inhabitants also participate in palm oil milling, lumbering, palm wine tapping, local gin making, trading, carving and weaving. The most important mineral in the area is petroleum. Other minerals include natural gas, clay and industrial sand. Oloibiri where crude oil was first found in commercial quantity in Nigeria is located in Bayelsa one of the states in the geopolitical zone (Edoumiekumo et al, 2013b).

Secondary data which were collected during the National Living Standard Survey (NLSS) of households by the National Bureau of Statistics between 2009 and 2010 were adopted. The sample design adopted was a multi-stage stratified sampling. At

the first stage, from each State and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT, Abuja) clusters 120 housing units called Enumeration Area (EA) were selected at random. In the second stage 10 housing units from the selected EAs were randomly selected. A total of 600 households were randomly chosen in each of the States and 300 from the FCT, summing up to 21,900 households in all (NBS, 2010). However, some households did not fully complete the questionnaires. Therefore, data were available only for 19,158 households. In Akwa-Ibom, Bayelsa, Cross-river, Delta, Edo and Rivers states data were available for 510, 524, 501, 416, 556 and 381 households respectively bringing the number to 2,888. Households' characteristics were appropriately weighted for cross-sectional differences. It was the weighted data for the six states that constitutes the South-South Geopolitical Zone of Nigeria that this study adopted. Edoumiekumo et al (2013b) in their study of "Multidimensional Energy Poverty in the South-South Geopolitical Zone of Nigeria" have also adopted these data.

3.2 Model Specification

3.2.1 Poverty Incidence, Gap and Severity

The poverty measure that was used in this analysis is the class of decomposable poverty measures by Foster, Greer and Thorbecke (FGT). They are widely used because they are consistent and additively decomposable (Foster *et al*., 1984).The FGT index is given by

$$P_\alpha = \frac{1}{N}\sum_{i=1}^{q}\left[\frac{Z - Y_i}{Z}\right]^\alpha \quad . \quad . \quad . \quad . \quad . \quad (1)$$

Where; Z is the poverty line defined as 2/3 of the Mean Per Capita Household Expenditure (MPCHHE), Yi is the value of poverty indicator/welfare index per capita in this case per capita expenditure in increasing order for all households; q is the number of poor people in the population of size N, and α is the poverty aversion parameter that takes values of zero (0), one (1) or two (2). The income poverty line is constructed as 2/3 of mean per capita household total expenditure. When α=0, P_α measures the proportion of people in the population whose per capita expenditure

on food and non-food items fall below the poverty line (poverty incidence). When α=1, P_α measures the depth of poverty-how deep below the poverty line is the averagely poor (poverty gap) and when α=2, P_α measures how farther the core poor are from the poverty line compared to the averagely poor (the severity of poverty).

3.2.2 Determinants of Poverty

A logistic (logit) regression model was employed to estimate the odds ratio that a household is poor if its per capita consumption expenditure is below the constructed poverty line given her socioeconomic characteristics. The logit model involves estimating a dichotomous (qualitative) response model. The model begins with the cumulative logistic function

$$P_i = E(Y_i = 1|X_i) = \frac{1}{1 + e^{-(\beta_0+\beta_1 X_i)}} \quad . \quad . \quad . \quad . \quad (2)$$

This can be rewritten as

$$P_i = E(Y_i = 1|X_i) = \frac{e^{(\beta_0+\beta_1 X_i)}}{1 + e^{\beta_0+\beta_1 X_i)}} \quad . \quad . \quad . \quad . \quad (3)$$

Where: P_i is the probability that a household (i.e. Y=1), is poor, given its socioeconomic characteristics X. The probability that the household is non- poor, 1-P_i (probability of an event not occurring) that is Y=0 is then presented as

$$1 - P_i = E(Y_i = 0|X_i) = \frac{1}{1 + e^{(\beta_0+\beta_1 X_i)}} \quad . \quad . \quad . \quad . \quad (4)$$

Therefore we can write the odds ratio as

$$\frac{P_i}{1 - P_i} = Y_i = \frac{e^{(\beta_0+\beta_1 X_i)}}{1 + e^{(\beta_0+\beta_1 X_i)}} * \left[1 + e^{(\beta_0+\beta_1 X_i)}\right] = e^{(\beta_0+\beta_1 X_i)} \quad . \quad . \quad . \quad (5)$$

Equation (5) is simply the odds ratio-the ratio of the probability that the household is poor to the probability that it is non-poor. However, eqn. (5) is nonlinear in the parameters, but taking the natural logarithm results in

$$L_i = ln\left(\frac{P_i}{1 - P_i}\right) = lnY_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_i \quad . \quad . \quad . \quad . \quad (6)$$

Eqn. (6) is the log likelihood function. L the log of odds ratio is not only linear in X but also in the parameters. The study first estimated eqn. (6) to obtain the log of

odds ratio. The parameters in eqn. (5) were retrieved from the estimated coefficients in eqn. (6). Because the log of odds ratio ordinarily does not make any sense the study relied on eqn. (5) for analysis.

Yi =1 if per capita expenditure < Z and 0 otherwise. ß′ is a vector of parameters to be estimated. X is a vector of explanatory variables (poverty correlates) comprising of sex, sector (rural and urban), state, age, number of people within the age bracket 15 and 60, occupation group (agriculture and others), household size, household expenditure on health, household expenditure on education and household expenditure on food.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The zonal level results from the FGT model showed poverty incidence, gap and severity of 0.4924, 0.2030 and 0.1113 respectively. That is 49.24 percent inhabitants of the South-South Geopolitical Zone are income poor, the averagely poor are deprived of 20.3 percent income (or have their income to be 20.3 percent below the poverty line) and the core poor are about 11.13 percent worse of compare to the averagely poor. These imply that to escape poverty an averagely poor household has to mobilize financial resources to be able to meet 20.3 percent of N23230.81 household per capita expenditure monthly and the core poor has to mobilize financial resources of 11.13 percent more than is required for the averagely poor to achieve the same feat (see table 1).

Table 1: Summary statistics of Household Per Capita Consumption Expenditure

Observations	2888
Total Household Per Capita Expenditure	100635854.5
Mean Household Per Capita Expenditure	34846.21
Standard deviation	52882.09
Minimum Household Per Capita Expenditure	1016.97
Maximum Household Per Capita Expenditure	1945253
2/3 of mean (Moderate poverty line)	23230.81
1/3 of mean (core poverty line)	11615.40
Poverty incidence	0.4924
Poverty gap (depth)	0.2030
Severity	0.1113

Source: Authors' Computation

State level results showed on table 2 revealed poverty incidences in Delta and Edo States of 50.48% and 51.25% respectively and were fairly higher than the zonal average. The other states had 48.44%, 48.66%, 49.1% and 46.98% respectively these were lower than the zonal average. In terms of contribution Edo state had 20.04% share making it the highest contributor. Of the remaining states Bayelsa had the highest contribution of 17.93% while Rivers state had the least share of 12.59%. While rural poverty of 49.34 was slightly above the regional average urban poverty of 48.74 was slightly below it. One could easily be misled looking at this statistic but the contribution by sector showed that rural dwellers contributed 82% to poverty in the zone while urban dwellers contributed a meager 18%. Furthermore, contrary to a widely held view that female headed households contribute more to poverty than male headed households our results showed that male contributed 91.56% to the incidence of poverty while female contributed a paltry 8.44%. Also, the incidence of male poverty of 52.82 percent almost doubled the 28.37% of female poverty. Further results showed that agricultural poverty incidence was 58.5% while all other sectors put together was 33.52%. The agricultural sector's share of the incidence was 74.75%

while the other sectors put together contributed 25.25%. These results imply that poverty in the zone is sector, gender and occupation bias.

Table 2: Poverty incidence, contribution by state, sector, gender and occupation group

State	Non-poor (%)	Moderately poor (%)	Core poor (%)	Total poor (%)	Contribution (%)
Regional	50.76	30.65	18.59	49.24	100
Akwa-Ibom	51.56	29.22	19.22	48.44	17.37
Bayelsa	51.34	30.15	18.51	48.66	17.93
Cross-rivers	51.00	31.14	17.96	49.10	17.30
Delta	49.52	30.05	20.43	50.48	14.77
Edo	48.74	32.19	19.06	51.25	20.04
Rivers	53.02	30.97	16.01	46.98	12.59
Rural	50.66	30.68	18.66	49.34	82.00
Urban	51.24	30.48	18.28	48.76	18.00
Male	47.18	32.94	19.88	52.82	91.56
Female	71.63	17.26	11.11	28.37	8.44
Agricultural	41.50	36.05	22.45	58.50	74.75
Sector	66.48	21.48	12.04	33.52	25.25
Other Sectors					

Source: Author's computation

For the determinants of income poverty the logistic regression results are presented on table 3. The odds ratio showed that households in Bayelsa, Cross-rivers, Delta and Edo states are 1.02, 1.08, 1.1 and 1.003 times more likely to be poor while households in Rivers state are 0.86 times less likely to be poor than households in Akwa-Ibom state respectively. However, none of the state differential coefficients were statistically significant, indicating that all households in the region are equally likely to be poor, the state of residence is actually not important. The results also showed that households headed by female are 0.67 times less likely to be poor than households headed by male. This statistic is also significant at 1% level reinforcing the results from the incidence analysis that male headed households

contributed more to poverty in the region. This is contrary to the popularly held view that poverty hits female headed households more. Also, households headed by people in the agricultural sector are 3.74 times more likely to be poor than those headed by people in the other sectors and this is statistically significant at 1% level indicating that poverty in the area also takes occupational dimension. Furthermore, households dwelling in the rural areas are 1.02 time more likely to be poor than their urban counterparts but this is statistically not significant. Households headed by literates are 0.91 times less likely to be poor than those headed by illiterates but this is also statistically not significant. Other results showed that households with larger family sizes and those with more people between the ages of 15 and 60 years are 1.76 and 1.05 times more likely to be poor provided the household size has reached a threshold of 5 members and 5 members within the age bracket 15-60 years, but only the household size was statistically significant. Also, households headed by older people are 0.98 times less likely to be poor provided the head has reached a threshold 48 years this became marginally significant only at 10% level. Finally, the results showed that households with larger per capita expenditure on education and health, and those with larger share of food expenditure are 0.999, 0.999 and 0.02 times respectively less likely to be poor. The results therefore predicts that the key determinants of households income poverty in the south-south geopolitical zone of Nigeria are: being in a male headed household; being engaged primarily in the agricultural sector; living in a household with large family size usually larger than 5 members; living in a household with higher per capita education expenditure usually greater than N6718.09, higher per capita health expenditure, usually greater than N18456.9 and larger share of food expenditure as a percentage of total consumption expenditure usually greater than 60 percent. These have serious implications for policy formulation.

Table 3: Determinants of Poverty

Poverty	Coefficient	Odds ratio	X	Std. Error	z-stat.	P >| z |
Bayelsa	0.020	1.020	0.181	0.157	0.13	0.896
Cross-rivers	0.079	1.083	0.173	0.170	0.50	0.614
Delta	0.099	1.104	0.144	0.180	0.61	0.543
Edo	0.003	1.003	0.193	0.157	0.02	0.984
Rivers	-0.149	0.862	0.132	0.145	-0.88	0.378
Female	-0.400	0.670	0.146	0.094	-2.84	0.005
Rural	0.015	1.015	0.818	0.125	0.12	0.906
Agriculture	1.318	3.736	0.629	0.418	11.78	0.000
literate	-0.093	0.911	0.150	0.122	-0.70	0.487
Household size	0.563	1.756	4.851	0.046	21.30	0.000
Age in years	-0.018	0.982	47.55	0.011	-1.65	0.099
People b/w age 15 and 60 yrs	0.049	1.051	4.90	0.116	0.45	0.656
Education Expenditure Per capita	-0.00005	0.999	6718.09	4.90e-06	-10.83	0.000
health Expenditure Per capita	-0.00006	0.999	18456.9	4.19e-06	-14.57	0.000
share of food expenditure	-3.912	0.020	0.583	0.006	-12.96	0.000
constant	0.332	-	-	0.274	1.21	0.226
No of observation	2888					
Log likelihood	-1399.368					
Likelihood ratio chi2(15)	1204.21					
Prob>chi2	0.0000					

Note: 29 failures and 0 successes completely determined.

Source: Authors' Computation using Stata 11

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study has so far analyzed poverty in the South-South geopolitical zone of Nigeria and examined its determinants. Based on our results we conclude that income poverty in the zone, contrary to a largely held view is more of male issue than female. While the study recognized that poverty cuts across all occupation and

sector it has revealed that poverty is more a serious issue in the rural areas and affects households in the agricultural sector more, the state where the household resides does not really make any difference. While the averagely poor have to mobilize financial resources up to20.3 percent of N23230.81 household per capita expenditure per month to escape poverty the core poor have to mobilize additional 11.13 percent of N23230.81 household per capita expenditure financial resources to achieve the same feat.

This paper therefore recommends that poverty reduction efforts in the south-south geopolitical zone should aim at providing rural households equal opportunity to achieve their potentials not minding the state of residence. While male headed households contributed more to the incidence of poverty the proportion of female headed households that live in poverty is large in its own right thus efforts to reduce poverty must not be gender biased. Free, Compulsory and quality education at least up to the basic level, easily accessible and quality healthcare services, a population policy that encourages a married couple to have at most three children or at most a household size of 5 should be fostered. The economic environment should be given a face-lift to allow small and medium scale businesses to thrive this will help reduce the number of dependants in households.

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